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81 ¶ The President's News Conference of
April 27, 1955.

[This is a complete transcript of the news conference of this date. All of the President's replies were released for broadcasting or direct quotation at that time.]

THE PRESIDENT. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I have no announcements, so we will go right to questions.

Q. Marvin L. Arrowsmith, Associated Press: Mr. President, between last Saturday and yesterday this Government seems to have changed its mind some about insisting that Nationalist China participate in any discussions between the United States and Red China concerning the Formosa area, at least with respect to a cease-fire. Can you tell us why the change, if you regard it as a change?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, I think the change is far more apparent than real.

Last Saturday it was stated we were not going to talk about the affairs of Nationalist China except with them present. I believe that Mr. Dulles made this point clear also at his own press conference, saying we would not discuss the affairs of the Chinese Nationalists behind their back; but that as a test of good intent, if the Chi-Com wanted to talk merely about cease-fire, we would be glad to meet with them and talk with them, but there would be no conferring about the affairs of the Chinese Nationalists.

So I think that the one statement may have erred in not being as complete as it should have been, but I don't believe it was a reversal of attitude.

Q. Robert E. Clark, International News Service: Mr. President, there have been reports that you have been in private communication with Marshal Zhukov and have asked him, among other things, to use his good offices to help obtain the release of American flyers imprisoned by Red China; is that correct?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, it is correct that I had some personal

administration changing its position, or do you think it will remain inflexible on the subject?

THE PRESIDENT. The subject was studied a long time, brought up before the Cabinet, of course, by the Secretary of Labor, and with all of the charts showing the reasons for changes.

Since the minimum wage was fixed at 75 cents, the cost of living has gone up sufficiently to justify a rise in the minimum wage to, I believe it was, 86.4. Now, I am not going to take my oath on that, but it was close to that.

So we decided that 90 cents was a good round figure, would be over and above that.

We said it should go higher, but we wanted to put our emphasis, if this were possible, on the spreading of this minimum wage rather than raising it, because the minimum wage today in any covered industry affects very, very few people. But there are many, many thousands working who are not covered by the minimum wage field at all.

We would like to see a spread rather than just the rise, because we don't think the rise is so meaningful.

Q. Edward P. Morgan, American Broadcasting Company: Mr. President, what can you tell us, sir, of this Government's views now towards the sticky situation in Viet-Nam and, particularly, whether the Government thinks there may be the necessity to change the policy of recognition of Premier Diem?

THE PRESIDENT. I can't give you any final answer because, as you know, it is still under discussion.

We have called General Collins back here, a man in whom we have the greatest of confidence and who has been right in the thick of things out there, and who has been supporting, of course, Premier Diem.

Now, there have occurred lots of difficulties. People have left the Cabinet, and so on. You know what most of those difficulties are. It is a strange and it is almost an inexplicable situation, at least from our viewpoint. But he has come back because we have up not only the need to clarify ideas as to future policy,

but there is the question of aid for Asia. His testimony, of course, would be valuable not only to us, but he will testify before committees on the Hill. What the exact terms of our future policy will be, I can't say.

Q. Elie Abel, New York Times: Could you give us your reaction, sir, to the recent statement of former President Truman that the press is treating you with special tenderness and granting to you an immunity which some of your predecessors——

THE PRESIDENT. I can only say if you are, thank you.
[Laughter]

Listen, I am not above saying that I often need friendly treatment.

Q. Benjamin R. Cole, Indianapolis Star: Mr. President, could you tell us what role you believe the Federal Government should play in the polio vaccine program?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, I think that they have tackled it correctly. I believe very greatly in the power that can be developed by the humanitarian agencies of this country when they work together in cooperation. And if they have the direction which is to be given them through the Advisory Committee set up in Mrs. Hobby's Department, I believe that we will get the most rapid possible distribution of this vaccine.

Now, the reason I opposed—originally at least—any compulsory role for the Federal Government, I believe it would slow it up. By the time you established more bureaus and all of the rest of the stuff, I believe you would be in trouble.

I believe it is going just as fast as it can. I get the reports—I think by August first, as I recall, they believe a hundred percent of the children from 1 to 9 will be vaccinated. And by November first, I think, a hundred percent of those up to 19. There will be six companies producing this. They will put it into a pool, and this Advisory Committee will lay out the priorities in which it is to go out, and I suppose with a careful eye—I know with a careful eye for any threatened emergency or anything of that sort. We will certainly do the best we can.